



REMEMBERING
Roger McKay

February 7, 1940 - August 18, 2023



It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of Roger Barry McKay.

He passed away surrounded by his family following complications related to a sudden onset of pancreatic cancer.

He was born on February 7, 1940 in Victoria, BC and passed away on August 18, 2023 in Kelowna, BC.

He is predeceased by his parents Eldon Frizzell McKay and Marguerite McKay (nee McKee), and his younger sister Donna Gregory (Richard).

He is survived by his wife of 61 years, Gunhild McKay, his sons, Spencer McKay (Kristin) and Cameron McKay (Drea), his daughter Alison Brown (Warren), and his grandchildren Olivia, Abby, Claire, and Charlie.

His mother a school teacher and his father a BC Police / RCMP Sergeant, Roger grew up moving to different towns every 4 years, living in Victoria, Grand Forks, Kamloops, and finally Port Alberni. There, he played basketball for the Alberni Chieftans, graduated high school, and met the love of his life, Gunhild.

He and Gunhild married in 1962 in Port Alberni, then moved to Vancouver, where Roger finished his Phys. Ed degree at the University of British Columbia, graduating at the top of his class. In 1966, they moved to Oliver to put down some roots and start a family. He was offered many positions throughout the province, but they chose Oliver because a friend told them, "it's like heaven here".

He was a beloved and longtime coach, teacher, counselor, and Vice Principal at Southern Okanagan Secondary School (SOSS). An imposing figure to many students when they walked the hallways of SOSS between classes, or when they were sent to his office for misbehaving, he always followed his "3 Fs' philosophy: firm, fair, and friendly.

He believed in the students and teachers at SOSS, trying to bring out the best in everyone to make the school the best it could possibly be. Many former students over the years would show up at our door to tell him the positive difference he made in their lives.

He dreamed up and made into reality the SOSS Enrichment Society, which now has over \$1 Million to support the development of SOSS and the students.

He served his community in many ways by spear-heading and developing committees and clubs, including the Oliver Sharks Swim Club, which, under his presidency, became the most competitive small swim club in the province with multiple individual and team awards at the Provincial Championships.

His most notable community development was the Oliver Mini-Basketball program, which helped involve thousands of children, and parents, in his favourite sport, basketball. "Mini-Ball" was an Oliver institution, which helped Oliver to develop a basketball dynasty with 3 Provincial Championships, each team made from players who were products of the Mini-Ball program.

Above all, he loved his family, providing the best support he could to his wife, and all of his children and grandchildren in all their endeavours.

He loved traveling with his family to see family, friends, sporting events, or to see the sights in BC, and into the Western USA, for camping trips and road trips.

He loved cars, putting many miles on his many cars over the years to attend his children's and grandchildren's many sporting and school-related events.

He and Gunhild traveled many places throughout the world including Hawaii, Mexico, and multiple trips to Europe, where they fell in love with the small villages in Spain and the south of France.

He loved the ocean, especially a nice beach; Tofino always held a special place in his heart.

He loved dogs, especially Norwegian Elkhounds.

He was the kindest and most passionate and loving man.

He will be missed by many.

In lieu of flowers, please donate to the SOSS Endowment Fund at:

PO Box 1445

Oliver BC. V0H 1T0

A Celebration of Life will be held on October 22, 2023, at the SOSS gymnasium, at 1:30pm.

